

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the subject application are respectfully requested.

Claims 1-8 are currently pending in the application, with Claims 1 and 5 being independent. Claims 1 and 5 are amended to more clearly recite the features of the present invention.

Claims 1-8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as allegedly anticipated by Kato (U.S. Patent No. 6,440,203). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicant's invention as set forth in amended Claim 1 is directed to an ink-jet recording method comprising the steps of preparing pigment inks of plural colors and ejecting the inks to form colored pixels on a recording medium to conduct recording. With respect to at least one color of the plural colors, a thick pigment ink containing a pigment at a relatively high concentration and a thin pigment ink containing pigment at a relatively low concentration are used. The average particle diameter of pigment particles contained in the thin pigment ink is greater than the average particle diameter of pigment particles contained in the thick pigment ink.

Applicant's invention as set forth in amended Claim 5 is directed to an ink-jet recording apparatus comprising a plurality of ink-jet recording heads for respectively ejecting pigment inks of plural colors to form colored pixels on a recording medium to conduct recording. With respect to at least one color of the plural colors, an ink-jet recording head for ejecting a thick pigment ink containing a pigment at a relatively high concentration and an ink-jet recording head for ejecting a thin pigment ink containing the pigment at a relatively low concentration are provided. The average particle diameter of pigment particles contained in the thin pigment ink is greater than the average particle diameter of pigment particles contained in the thick pigment ink.

Accordingly, in the present invention as recited in independent Claims 1 and 5, the average particle diameter of pigment particles contained in the thin pigment ink is greater than the average particle diameter of pigment particles contained in the thick pigment ink. With

this feature, remarkable effects, such as, long-term storage, kagation, and light fastness, can be achieved.

Kato is directed to an ink composition that includes a first colorant, a second colorant, a penetrating agent, water, and a water-soluble organic solvent. The first colorant is a pigment which is dispersible and/or dissolvable in water without any dispersant, and the second colorant is a pigment dispersion including a pigment and a dispersant for dispersing the pigment. The average particle diameter of the pigment in the first colorant is approximately in the range of 1 to 300 nm. The average particle diameter of the pigment in the second colorant is also approximately in the range of 1 to 300 nm.

Kato, however, is not read to teach or suggest at least that the average particle diameter of the pigment particles contained in the thin pigment ink is greater than the average particle diameter of pigment particles contained in the thick pigment ink. Although in the examples, Kato does teach the average particle diameter for yellow pigment (col. 12, lines 36-40) and magenta pigment (col. 12, line 65 to col. 13, line 3) of the first colorant, Kato does not teach or suggest the average particle diameter of the cyan pigments in the first colorant, or the average particle diameter of the second colorant pigments. Additionally, Kato does not teach or suggest the mixing method for the first and second colorants, or the average particle diameter of the pigment particles contained in the final yellow, magenta, and cyan inks. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) are requested.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicant submits that the present invention is patentably defined by independent Claims 1 and 5. The dependent claims are also allowable in their own right, for defining features of the present invention in addition to those recited in their respective independent claims. Individual consideration of the dependent claims is requested.

Applicant submits that the present application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration, withdrawal of the objection and rejections set forth in the above-noted Office Action, and an early Notice of Allowability are requested.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark A. Williamson", written over a horizontal line.

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